

Division of Highway Traffic Safety

The mission of the Division of Highway Traffic Safety is to reduce fatalities, injuries and property damage on the roads of New Jersey resulting from traffic crashes. To achieve its mission, the Division undertakes traffic safety programs relating to education, enforcement, and engineering. The bulk of the Division's funding comes from the federal government, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Funding received by the Division is used to undertake statewide traffic safety programs. It is also dispersed to local, county and state agencies in the form of traffic safety grants designed to support both educational and enforcement programs — programs designed to reduce traffic-related deaths and injuries. Additional information about the Division can be obtained at www.njsaferoads.com.



Highlights

101 Days of Summer—

The boardwalk in Seaside Heights, Ocean County, served as a backdrop for the Division's "101 Days of Summer" kick-off event in May 2006. Hundreds of law enforcement and traffic safety professionals were in attendance as the Division announced two major summer traffic safety initiatives for 2006 — "Click It or Ticket" and "You Drink & Drive, You Lose." The event was widely-publicized by the media, serving to put the motoring public on notice of these important summer season enforcement campaigns.

"You Drink & Drive, You Lose"—

Participating law enforcement agencies zeroed in on the problem of intoxicated drivers during a two-week crackdown on drinking and driving staged at the close of the 2006 summer season. Known as the "You Drink & Drive, You Lose" campaign, the effort began on August 18 and ended on September 4 — the close of the 2006 Labor Day holiday weekend. A total of 391 police participated in the initiative. Police made a total of 1,721 Driving While Intoxicated arrests during the two-week period — an increase over the 1,583 arrests made during the 2005 campaign. Overall, police issued nearly 70,000 summonses for all violations — moving and non-moving — during the 2006 campaign. Two major public events helped launch the "You Drink & Drive, You Lose" initiative. The first took place on August 18th in Times Square in New York City and featured appearances by law enforcement and traffic safety professionals from New Jersey, New York and Connecticut (the Tri-State Traffic Safety Partners.) A second event took place on August 25 in Upper Pittsgrove Township, Salem County. The event took place at the site where Navy Ensign John Elliott was killed by a drunk driver in 2000. John Elliott's death led to the creation, by his father William Elliott, of The Hero Campaign for Designated Drivers. The Division regularly works with the Hero Campaign on drunk-driving-related awareness efforts.

"Click It or Ticket"—

The 2006 "Click It or Ticket" seat belt enforcement initiative resulted in the issuance of more than 56,000 seat belt summonses by participating police agencies. The initiative was preceded by a vigorous awareness campaign conducted via public events and advertising. Statewide, a total of 441 police agencies took part in "Click It or Ticket" — the largest number ever. Of the police agencies involved, 159 had received grants from the Division enabling them to participate, while 282 other departments used existing funds. The 2006 "Click It or Ticket" campaign ran from May 22 through June 4.

Prior to launch of the initiative, the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) determined through scientific surveys that seat belt usage in New Jersey was approximately 86-percent. NJIT conducted a post-event survey that showed the rate of seat belt compliance at 90 percent — a new statistical high. The increase documented in 2006 raised the bar for statewide seat belt compliance, and provided momentum for local and state law enforcement to maintain its seat belt vigilance year around.

Speed Enforcement Pilot Project—

In 2006, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) requested that New Jersey take part in a Tri-State Speed Enforcement Campaign during the month of July that would serve as a national pilot project to reduce crashes caused by speeding drivers. Under the slogan "Obey the Signs or Pay the Fines," the Division focused its pilot program on four counties — Bergen, Essex, Hudson, and Passaic — to keep it manageable. Grant funding for the project was awarded to 37 of 122 police agencies within the four counties. Non-funded agencies were asked to participate and report their data to the Division. In all, 94 percent of police departments in the four counties participated.



Public awareness concerning the initiative was accomplished through public service announcements created by the Division, and aired via its contract with the New Jersey Broadcasters Association. By the end of July 2006, participating police agencies had issued a total of 6,357 speeding summonses. During the same 31-day period, a total of 26,894 summonses were written for all violations, moving and non-moving. It is hoped that, upon a final review of the pilot effort by NHTSA, the program will have proven successful in reducing average vehicle speeds, as well as speed-related crashes, injuries and deaths.

Pedestrian “Think Safety” Program—

The Division launched a “Think Safety” pedestrian protection campaign in 2006 to address the increasing number of injuries that occur as Jersey Shore town populations swell during the summer tourism season and foot, bicycle and automobile traffic intensifies. In 2006, the Division provided a \$40,000 grant to the South Jersey Traffic Safety Alliance

(SJTSA) for a public information and awareness campaign targeting the shore-area pedestrian safety problem. The Alliance created public service announcements and had them conspicuously displayed on signs and posters, as well as on aerial banners towed from aircrafts. Working in concert with the Ocean City Police Department and the SJTSA, the Division will be adding new elements to this continuing public safety project each summer. The goal with “Think Safety” is to build a program over several years that will be as identifiable – and demonstrably effective — as the “Click It or Ticket” seat belt initiative.

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